



Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat: Mastering the Elements of Good Cooking

Samin Nosrat

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A visionary new master class in cooking that distills decades of professional experience into just four simple elements, from the woman declared “America’s next great cooking teacher” by Alice Waters.

In the tradition of *The Joy of Cooking* and *How to Cook Everything* comes *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, an ambitious new approach to cooking by a major new culinary voice. Chef and writer Samin Nosrat has taught everyone from professional chefs to middle school kids to author Michael Pollan to cook using her revolutionary, yet simple, philosophy. Master the use of just four elements—Salt, which enhances flavor; Fat, which delivers flavor and generates texture; Acid, which balances flavor; and Heat, which ultimately determines the texture of food—and anything you cook will be delicious. By explaining the hows and whys of good cooking, *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* will teach and inspire a new generation of cooks how to confidently make better decisions in the kitchen and cook delicious meals with any ingredients, anywhere, at any time.

Echoing Samin’s own journey from culinary novice to award-winning chef, *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* immediately bridges the gap between home and professional kitchens. With charming narrative, illustrated walkthroughs, and a lighthearted approach to kitchen science, Samin demystifies the four elements of good cooking for everyone. Refer to the canon of 100 essential recipes—and dozens of variations—to put the lessons into practice and make bright, balanced vinaigrettes, perfectly caramelized roast vegetables, tender braised meats, and light, flaky pastry doughs.

Featuring 150 illustrations and infographics that reveal an atlas to the world of flavor by renowned illustrator Wendy MacNaughton, *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* will be your compass in the kitchen. Destined to be a classic, it just might be the last cookbook you’ll ever need.

With a foreword by Michael Pollan.

Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat: Mastering the Elements of Good Cooking Details

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C says

This book is flat-out genius and more than deserves all the praise it received. *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* is far from a normal cookbook: Nosrat uses approachable, funny prose and helpful drawings to explain the basics of cooking and baking by considering the elements of salt, fat, acid, and heat. In this way the book really teaches you how to cook everything, not just the recipes clustered at the book's conclusion. This is a cookbook you actually READ vs flipping through a litany of recipes before giving up. I can't overemphasize how enjoyable I found this book.

Bonny says

Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat does offer an interesting way to think about the preparation of food, but I didn't find it "indispensable" or one that I "can't imagine living without" as Michael Pollan writes in the foreword. Author Samin Nosrat tells us that "there are only four basic factors that determine how good your food will taste: salt, which enhances flavor; fat, which amplifies flavor and makes appealing textures possible; acid, which brightens and balances; and heat, which ultimately determines the texture of food." Those four are important and she conveys valuable information about how to use each of these to make better food. I wondered where sugar fit into this and why she left it out of the basic four. She does talk about sugar in each section, but mainly to say that salt will mask bitterness more effectively than sugar, and sugar is a good balance for acid. This first section is written in a chatty tone, telling the reader about the mistakes she made along the way along with things she did that worked. It is a little intimidating to the average reader/cook to read about Alice Waters and Chez Panisse, but Nosrat's writing conveys her passion without being overbearing.

The second section has recipes, and while most of them sounded like they would be good, I didn't find any that I felt I simply had to make. The author might have a gift for making things far more complicated than I want to be in the kitchen. She has a recipe for Torn Croutons that have only bread and olive oil as ingredients but goes on for four pages to obtain "even, yet rustic-looking" croutons. The Summer Tomato and Herb Salad lists tomatoes, salt, vinaigrette, and herbs for ingredients, and then continues for five pages of instructions. I think many of us have probably made this deliciously without a recipe at all. Chicken Pot Pie takes up seven pages and includes the sentence "Nestle the browned chicken into the vegetables." (Nestle just made me laugh!)

Making good food is both a science and an art, and something I enjoy trying to do most times I prepare food. For me, that also includes simplifying things when possible. I think Samin Nosrat is an exceptional cook who makes exceptional food, but I don't think that her methods (and urging cooks to season cooking water with "palmfuls of salt") will become indispensable in my kitchen.

Book Bingo 2017 - About food

Chessa says

Full review at [Leveled Up Reading](#)

I love a good cookbook, but *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* goes beyond the normal boundaries of the genre. I would almost say that this book is like the kosher salt in your kitchen - it's going to enhance alllll the other recipes and cookbooks in your life. Personally, I have more confidence in my cooking than before reading this book, AND my food is more delicious. I couldn't really ask for anything more!

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From reader reviews:

Maria Gardner:

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